

Illinois State Historical Society

JANUARY, 1908



ABRAHAM LINCOLN  
in 1854

An Address delivered before the  
Illinois State Historical Society, at  
its 9th Annual Meeting at Spring-  
field, Illinois, Jan. 30, 1908

By  
HORACE WHITE



# Illinois State Historical Society

JANUARY, 1908



## ABRAHAM LINCOLN in 1854

An Address delivered before the  
Illinois State Historical Society, at  
its 9th Annual Meeting at Spring-  
field, Illinois, Jan. 30, 1908

By  
HORACE WHITE

Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2010 with funding from

The Institute of Museum and Library Services through an Indiana State Library LSTA Grant

# Abraham Lincoln in 1854.

---

*Ladies and Gentlemen:*

When I was asked to address you on some particular event or feature of Mr. Lincoln's career, I chose the period of 1854, because I then first became acquainted with him and because he then received his first great awakening and showed his countrymen what manner of man he was. His debate with Douglas in 1858 became more celebrated because it focussed the attention of a greater audience and led to larger immediate results, but the latter was merely a continuation of the former. The subject of debate was the same in both years, the combatants were the same, and the audiences were in part the same. The contest of 1858 has been more talked about and written about than any other intellectual encounter in our national annals, and that is perhaps another reason why I should address you on the earlier one which was its real beginning.

## THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN 1854.

The year 1854 began in a period of reaction in our politics. In 1848 the Free Soil party had polled nearly 300,000 votes for Martin Van Buren for President. In 1852 its strength had dwindled to about half that number. Franklin Pierce was President, Jefferson Davis Secretary of War, and Roger B. Taney Chief Justice. Seward, Fish, Sumner, Chase, Fessenden, Toombs, and Douglas were the only Senators who are now generally remembered. Two members of the House, Breckenridge and Hendricks, became Vice-Presidents later; of the remaining 231 members only Banks, Benton, Grow, and Alexander H. Stephens can be readily identified by the present generation. Among the Governors of States were Seymour of New York, Grimes of Iowa, and Andrew Johnson of Tennessee. All the others have dropped below the horizon, but it is doubtful if any of them is more obscure now than Abraham Lincoln was in 1854. He had been a member of Congress for one term, but had been shelved. He had made a speech in the House reviewing the acts of President Polk in bringing on the war with Mexico. It was a good speech. It contained the Lincolnian marks of logical force and felicitous choice of words, but it was not the best speech made on his own side of the House on that subject. The best speech was made by Alexander Stephens of Georgia. So Lincoln himself said in a letter to Herndon dated Washington, February 2, 1848, in these words:

"Dear William: I just take my pen to say that Mr. Stephens of Georgia, a little, thin, pale-faced, consumptive man, with a voice like Logan's, has just concluded the very best speech of an hour's length I ever heard. My old, withered, dry eyes are full of tears yet."

Such praise from such a source prompted me to search the pages of the *Congressional Globe* and read that speech of a Southern statesman against a war waged in the interest of slavery. I found it replete with

legal and constitutional lore, with moral grandeur and righteous indignation, and tinged with such glimpses of battle and death, and needless suffering and sorrow, that I wondered not that Abraham Lincoln at the age of thirty-nine wept over the picture. How little did these two men then think that they were destined to meet in conference seventeen years later, charged with far greater responsibilities in a bloodier conflict.

### ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND HENRY CLAY.

Mr. Lincoln was a follower of Henry Clay. On the 16th of July, 1852, he delivered in Springfield a funeral oration on the great Kentuckian in which, among other titles to distinction, he named him as the chief actor in framing and passing the Missouri Compromise act of 1820. The Missouri Compromise was an agreement between the North and the South, in Congress assembled, by which Missouri was admitted to the Union as a slave-holding State on condition that slavery should be forever prohibited in the territory west of Missouri and north of the line of 36° 30' north latitude. In his eulogy of Clay, Mr. Lincoln quoted a passage of noble eloquence from him in 1827, in which slavery was spoken of as a detestable crime in its origin, and as the product of fraud and violence against the most unfortunate portion of the globe. Then Mr. Lincoln added these words:

"Pharaoh's country was cursed with plagues and his hosts were lost in the Red Sea for striving to retain a captive people who had already served them more than four hundred years. *May like disasters never befall us!*"

What a fearful looking for, of judgment to come, was there foreshadowed!

In 1852 slavery was not the exciting subject of controversy that it became a few years later, and a Henry Clay Whig in Central Illinois was not likely to catch fire from the torch of Garrison in Boston, or even from that of Elijah Lovejoy in Alton. Nevertheless, Mr. Lincoln's mind was brooding over the abyss, as we discover by some loose scraps of his handwriting which have escaped the tooth of time, and to which I shall allude presently.

### REPEAL OF THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE.

On the 4th of January, 1854, Senator Douglas of Illinois reported from the Committee on Territories a bill to organize the Territory of Nebraska, embracing all the country west of the State of Missouri and north of 36° 30' north latitude. It provided that said territory, or any portion of it, when admitted as a State or States, should be received into the Union with or without slavery, as their constitution might prescribe at the time of their admission. The Missouri Compromise act of 1820 was not repealed by this provision, and it must have been plain to everybody that if slavery were excluded from the *Territory* it would not be there when the people should come together to form a *State*.

Three days later a provision was inserted by Douglas that all questions pertaining to slavery in the Territories, and in the new States to be formed therefrom, should be left to the decision of the people residing

therein by their representatives to be chosen by them for that purpose. Even this did not repeal the Missouri Compromise. Although it allowed the people while in the Territorial condition to talk and vote on slavery in the abstract, it did not open the door to any slaves, nor did it fix any time when the talking and voting on the abstract question should be decisive.

Twelve days after the Nebraska bill was first reported Senator Dixon of Kentucky offered an amendment to repeal the Missouri Compromise outright, and after some resistance Douglas accepted it, and a few days later he brought in a new bill dividing the Territory into two parts, Kansas and Nebraska. The object of this division was to give the Missourians a chance to make the southernmost one a slave State, if they could. The Missourians so understood it. In their eyes the Kansas-Nebraska bill was a new Missouri Compromise founded upon the ruins of the old one.

The bill passed both Houses of Congress and became a law May 30, 1854. By its terms it was based upon the principle of "popular sovereignty," or "sacred right of self-government," or "right of the people to govern themselves." Yet it was open to more than one interpretation, since it did not say at what period, or in what manner, the right to admit or reject slavery might be exercised. Should this decision be made by the first one hundred, or one thousand, or ten thousand settlers in the Territory? Should the right to determine the question rest with the Territorial Legislature or with a Constitutional Convention, and in the latter case should the Constitution be submitted to a popular vote for ratification or rejection? Only one thing was altogether certain, and that was that the barrier which had excluded slavery from the Territory in question had been swept away.

### ITS EFFECT UPON LINCOLN.

Herndon tells us that with the repeal of the Missouri Compromise his office discussions with Lincoln on politics became more animated, Lincoln insisting that the differences between freedom and slavery were becoming sharper—that the one must overcome the other, and that postponing the struggle would only make it the more deadly in the end. "The day of compromise," he said, "had passed. These two great ideas had been kept apart only by the most artful means. They were like two wild beasts in sight of each other, but held apart. Some day these deadly antagonists would break their bonds and then the question would be settled."

The repeal of the Missouri Compromise opened Lincoln's eyes to the fact that his country could not endure permanently half slave and half free. His first *public* expression of that belief was given in Springfield in his speech before the Republican State Convention, June 16, 1858, but he gave private expression to it in 1854. Mr. Frederick Trevor Hill, in his book on Lincoln as a Lawyer, says:

"Lincoln was attending court on the circuit when the news [of the passage of the Nebraska bill] reached him, and Judge Dickey, one of his fellow practitioners, who was sharing his room in the local tavern at the time, reports that Lincoln sat on the edge of his bed and discussed the political situation far into the night. At last Dickey fell asleep, but when he awoke in the morning Lincoln was sitting up in bed, deeply

absorbed in thought. 'I tell you, Dickey,' he observed, as though continuing the argument of the previous evening, 'this nation cannot exist half slave and half free.'

Thomas Jefferson said something very like this, but in less sententious phrase, in 1820, when the Missouri Compromise was enacted. He then said:

"A geographical line coinciding with a marked principle, moral and political, once conceived and held up to the angry passions of men, will never be obliterated, and every irritation will mark it deeper and deeper."

Lincoln had quoted these very words from Jefferson in his eulogy on Clay in 1852, yet they did not cause his heart to burn within him—they did not come to him as a revelation—they did not set the American Union before him as a house divided against itself until the Missouri Compromise was actually repealed. The repeal was like a blow on the head, which causes a man to see stars in the daytime.

### **ITS EFFECT ON THE NORTHERN STATES.**

When the Nebraska bill passed there was an explosion in every Northern State. The old parties were rent asunder and a new one began to collect around the nucleus which had supported Hale and Julian in 1852. These elements came together in mass conventions in 1854 in Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin, and voted to form a new party under the name Republican. In Illinois, however, the movement was slower. The elements were too discordant to crystallize readily. Rather more than one-half the population of the State was of Southern birth or descent. These people, whether classed as Whigs or Democrats, were very suspicious of anything which bore the taint of Abolitionism. Hence the men in the northern counties, of New England origin, who were eager to follow the example of their co-workers in the neighboring States, were obliged to consider the situation of their friends in the central and southern counties, and were thus restrained from taking immediate steps to form a new party.

The opponents of the Nebraska bill in Illinois were ranged in three camps, as Whigs, Anti-Nebraska Democrats, and Free-Soilers or Republicans. Of the first Mr. Lincoln soon became the recognized leader. The second was without a distinctive head, but Lyman Trumbull, by the promptness and energy he had shown in combating the Nebraska bill in the St. Clair district, seemed to be the coming man. The Free-Soilers were led by Owen Lovejoy and Ichabod Coddington, two Congregational clergymen, whose lips had been touched by a live coal from off the altar of eternal justice.

These men were preëminently qualified for the task of moulding the diverse elements of the State into an effective army. At the beginning Lovejoy and Coddington were the only ones who were entirely foot-loose and had a clear view of the course before them. The others were constrained by the foggiess of their environment to feel their way and to move with caution. They were fitted for their work because they were in true sympathy with their following. They were successful because they were not precipitate.



## STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS.

Yet, highly gifted as they were, they had a hard task before them in attempting to unhorse Stephen A. Douglas in Illinois. With him they had grown into some local fame and prominence, but he had distanced them in the race for public preferment and had reached a position of world-wide celebrity, while they were still little known beyond their own bailiwicks. He had achieved this distinction without external aid or prestige; with no powerful friends to give him a start. Nobody ever began the battle of life in humbler surroundings or with smaller pecuniary resources. Yet his advance was so rapid that it seemed as though he had only to ask anything from his fellow citizens in order to have it given to him more abundantly than he desired. He had filled the offices of State's Attorney, member of the Legislature, Register of the Land Office at Springfield, Secretary of State, Judge of the Supreme Court, Representative in Congress, Senator of the United States, and had been a formidable candidate for the Presidency in the Democratic National Convention of 1852.

In Congress, he had taken an active part in the annexation of Texas, in the war with Mexico, in the Oregon boundary dispute, and in the land grant for the Illinois Central Railway. In the Democratic party he had forged to the front by virtue of boldness in leadership, untiring industry, boundless ambition and self-confidence and horse power, engaging manners, great capacity as a party organizer, and unsurpassed powers as an orator and debater. He had a large head, surmounted by an abundant mane, which gave him the appearance of a lion prepared to roar or to crush his prey, and the resemblance was not seldom confirmed when he opened his mouth on the stump or in the Senate chamber. Although patriotic beyond a doubt, he was color blind to moral principles in politics and stone blind to the evils of slavery. In stature he was only five feet four inches high, but he had earned the title of the "Little Giant" before he entered Congress, and he kept it with the concurrence of both friends and enemies till the day of his death. In 1854 he filled the public eye in larger measure than any other American. He was the only man then living who could have carried through Congress a bill to repeal the Missouri Compromise. He was the only Northern man who would have had the audacity to propose it. Douglas and Lincoln had been rivals on many occasions and for many things, including the hand of Mary Todd, but Douglas had so completely distanced his competitor in the race for political honors that he hardly regarded him as a factor in the campaign of 1854. He probably considered Lincoln out of politics, as indeed he was until he came back on the crest of a great moral uprising.

## LINCOLN COLLECTING HIS THOUGHTS.

I have said that Lincoln's mind was brooding over the abyss which the repeal of the Missouri Compromise had disclosed. Some scraps of his handwriting have been preserved, to which the date of July, 1854, has been assigned in his printed works. They are doubtless part of the contents of his hat, which Herndon tells us was the handy receptacle of the thoughts that he occasionally jotted down and to which he desired to

have easy reference. Among these fugitive pieces was the following, dated July, 1854:

"The ant who has toiled and dragged a crumb to his nest will furiously defend the fruit of his labor against whatever robber assails him. So plain is it that the most dumb and stupid slave that ever toiled for a master does constantly know that he is wronged. So plain that no one, high or low, ever does mistake it, except in a plainly selfish way; for although volume upon volume is written to prove slavery a very good thing, we never hear of a man who wishes to take the good of it by being a slave himself."

Again, same date:

"We know Southern men declare that their slaves are better off than hired laborers among us. How little they know whereof they speak! There is no permanent class of hired laborers among us. Twenty-five years ago I was a hired laborer. The hired laborer of yesterday labors on his own account to-day and will hire others to labor for him to-morrow."

Again, same date:

"If A can prove, however conclusively, that he may of right enslave B, why may not B snatch the same argument and prove equally that he may enslave A? You say A is white and B is black. It is color, then; the lighter having the right to enslave the darker? Take care. By this rule you are to be the slave of the first man you meet with a fairer skin than your own. You do not mean color exactly? You mean the whites are intellectually the superiors of the blacks and therefore have the right to enslave them? Take care again. By this rule you are to be the slave of the first man you meet with an intellect superior to your own."

It happened that the Illinois Legislature was in session when Douglas introduced his Nebraska bill. In a letter to Joshua F. Speed, written subsequently, Lincoln said that of the one hundred members of the two Houses seventy were Democrats and that they held a party caucus to consider the measure. It turned out that only three of the whole number favored the bill. But a day or two later orders came from Douglas directing that resolutions be passed approving it. There was an immediate "flop" on the part of these dissenting statesmen. The resolutions were passed by a large majority, and the party in Illinois thus became committed to the measure—a remarkable instance of the throttling power of party discipline. Three Democratic Senators, however (Judd, Cook, and Palmer), refused to endorse the measure. Judd and Cook represented northern counties, where public sentiment was overwhelmingly hostile to the Nebraska bill. Palmer was in a more difficult position. His constituents were mainly of Southern birth or descent—he was a Kentuckian himself and he represented Macoupin in the Legislature. To the Republican imagination fifty years ago Macoupin was as dark as Erebus. A letter from Lincoln to Palmer dated September 7, 1854, suggesting that since the latter had determined not to swallow the nauseous Nebraska pill, he should make a few public speeches stating his reasons for dissenting, is in the published correspondence of the former.

#### THE DEBATES OF 1854.

Senator Douglas made his first appearance in Illinois after the passage of his bill on the evening of September 1, 1854, at Chicago. Here he

attempted to defend his course in repealing the Missouri Compromise. He had a chilling reception, and his friends asserted that he had been refused a hearing and that the meeting had been broken up by an Abolitionist mob. I was on the platform as a reporter, and my recollection of what happened is still vivid. There was nothing like violence at any time, but there was disorder growing out of the fact that the people had come prepared to dispute Douglas's sophisms and that Douglas himself was far from conciliatory when he found himself facing an unfriendly audience. The meeting was certainly a failure, and Douglas decided to make no more speeches in that part of the State during the campaign.

His next appearance was in Springfield during the week of the State Fair, where the most notable people of the State were assembled. He had announced that he would speak in the large hall of the State House on the 3d of October. As soon as the announcement was made Mr. Lincoln decided to reply to him on the following day from the same platform.

Douglas's justification of his Nebraska bill was that it established the principle of popular sovereignty in the Territories as it already existed in the States. Why, he asked, should not the people of the Territories have the right to form and regulate their own domestic institutions in their own way? Did they lose any of their rights or capabilities of self-government by migrating from their old homes to new ones? By ringing the changes on popular sovereignty and "sacred right of self-government," he was able to raise a good deal of dust and to obscure the real issue. The fallacy lay in the assumption that property in slaves did not differ from other kinds of property, and that taking negroes to the new Territories, and holding them there as slaves, was to be regarded in the same way as taking cattle, sheep, and swine.

#### **LINCOLN'S SPEECH AT SPRINGFIELD, OCTOBER 4th.**

Mr. Lincoln began his speech with an historical sketch of the events leading to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and then took up the fallacy of Douglas's "sacred right of self-government," to which he gave a merciless exposure, turning it over and over, inside and out, stripping off its mask, and presenting it in such light that nobody could fail to see the deception embodied in it. Such an exposition necessarily involved a discussion of slavery in all its aspects, and here for the first time do we find any broad and resounding statement of Mr. Lincoln's own attitude toward the institution. Here perhaps was the first distinct occasion for his making such a statement. He had voted in Congress some forty times for the Wilmot Proviso, so that his opposition to the extension of slavery into the Territories was not doubtful. As a stump speaker he had languidly supported the compromise measures of 1850. But until now there had been no occasion which imperatively called upon him to declare his position on the slavery question as a national political issue.

Such a call had now come, and he did not hesitate to tell the whole truth as he understood it. The telling of it makes this speech one of the imperishable political discourses of our history, if not of all time. It is superior to Webster's reply to Hayne, because its theme is loftier and its

scope wider. The keynote of Webster's speech was patriotism—the doctrine of self-government crystallized in the Federal Union; that of Lincoln's was patriotism plus humanity, the humanity of the negro whose place in the family of man was denied, either openly or tacitly, by the supporters of the Nebraska bill. I think also that Lincoln's speech is the superior of the two as an example of English style. It lacks something of the smooth, compulsive flow which takes the intellect captive in the Websterian diction, but it excels in the simplicity, directness and lucidity which appeal both to the intellect and to the heart.

I heard the whole of that speech. It was a warmish day in early October, and Mr. Lincoln was in his shirt sleeves when he stepped on the platform. I observed that, although awkward, he was not in the least embarrassed. He began in a slow and hesitating manner, but without any mistakes of language, dates, or facts. It was evident that he had mastered his subject, that he knew what he was going to say, and that he knew he was right. He had a thin, high-pitched falsetto voice of much carrying power, that could be heard a long distance in spite of the bustle and tumult of a crowd. He had the accent and pronunciation peculiar to his native State, Kentucky. Gradually he warmed up with his subject, his angularity disappeared, and he passed into that attitude of unconscious majesty that is so conspicuous in Saint-Gaudens's statue at the entrance of Lincoln Park in Chicago. I have often wondered how this artist, who never saw the subject of his work, could have divined his presence and his dignity as a public speaker so perfectly.

#### HIS IMPASSIONED UTTERANCES.

Progressing with his theme, his words began to come faster and his face to light up with the rays of genius and his body to move in unison with his thoughts. His gestures were made with his body and head rather than with his arms. They were the natural expression of the man, and so perfectly adapted to what he was saying that anything different from it would have been quite inconceivable. Sometimes his manner was very impassioned, and he seemed transfigured with his subject. Perspiration would stream from his face, and each particular hair would stand on end. Then the inspiration that possessed him took possession of his hearers also. His speaking went to the heart because it came from the heart. I have heard celebrated orators who could start thunders of applause without changing any man's opinion. Mr. Lincoln's eloquence was of the higher type, which produced conviction in others because of the conviction of the speaker himself. His listeners felt that he believed every word he said, and that, like Martin Luther, he would go to the stake rather than abate one jot or tittle of it. In such transfigured moments as these he was the type of the ancient Hebrew prophet as I learned that character at Sunday-school in my childhood.

That there were, now and then, electrical discharges of high tension in Lincoln's eloquence is a fact little remembered, so few persons remain who ever came within its range. The most remarkable outburst took place at the Bloomington Convention of May 29, 1856, at which the anti-Nebraska forces of Illinois were first collected and welded together as one

party. Mr. John L. Scripps, editor of the Chicago *Democratic Press*, who was present—a man of gravity little likely to be carried off his feet by spoken words—said:

“Never was an audience more completely electrified by human eloquence. Again and again during its delivery they sprang to their feet and upon the benches and testified by long-continued shouts and the waving of hats how deeply the speaker had wrought upon their minds and hearts. It fused the mass of hitherto incongruous elements into perfect homogeneity; and from that day to the present they have worked together in harmonious and fraternal union.”

The speech of 1854 made so profound an impression on me that I feel under its spell to this day. It is known in history as Mr. Lincoln's Peoria speech. Although first delivered in Springfield on October 4, it was repeated twelve days later at Peoria. Mr. Lincoln did not use a scrap of paper on either occasion, but he wrote it out afterwards at the request of friends and published it in successive numbers of the weekly *Sangamon Journal* at Springfield. In like manner were the orations of Cicero preserved. In this way has been preserved for us the most masterly forensic utterance of the whole slavery controversy, as I think.

### THE HUMANITY OF THE NEGRO.

Where the whole is of uniform excellence it is not easy to make extracts, but I shall make one or two, the first one touching the theme of the humanity of the negro, which the Douglas doctrine of “popular sovereignty” ignored:

“The great majority, South as well as North (he said), have human sympathies, of which they can no more divest themselves than they can of their sensibility to physical pain. These sympathies, in the bosoms of the Southern people, manifest, in many ways, their sense of the wrong of slavery and their consciousness that, after all, there is humanity in the negro. If they deny this let me address them a few plain questions. In 1820 you joined the North in declaring the African slave trade piracy and annexing to it the punishment of death. Why did you do this? If you did not feel that it was wrong why did you join in providing that men should be hung for it? The practice was no more than bringing wild negroes from Africa to such as would buy them. But you never thought of hanging men for catching and selling wild horses, wild buffaloes, or wild cattle.

“Again, you have among you a sneaking individual of the class of native tyrants known as the slave-dealer. He watches your necessities and crawls up to buy your slave at a speculating price. If you cannot help it you will sell to him, but if you can help it you drive him from your door. You despise him utterly. You do not recognize him as a friend or even as an honest man. Your children must not play with his; they may rollick freely with the little negroes, but not with the slave-dealer's children. If you are obliged to deal with him, you try to get through with the job without so much as touching him. It is common with you to join hands with the men you meet, but with the slave-dealer you avoid the ceremony—instantly shrinking from the snaky contact. If he grows rich and retires from business you still remember him and still keep up the ban of non-intercourse upon him and his family. You do not so treat the man who deals in corn, cotton, or tobacco.

“And yet again. There are in the United States and Territories, including the District of Columbia, 433,643 free blacks. At five hundred dollars per head they are worth over two hundred millions of dollars. How comes this vast amount of property to be running about without owners? We do not see free horses or free cattle running at large. How is this?

All these free blacks are the descendants of slaves or have been slaves themselves; and they would be slaves now but for something which has operated on their white owners inducing them at vast pecuniary sacrifice to liberate them. Is there any mistaking it? In all these cases it is your sense of justice and human sympathy continually telling you that the poor negro has some natural right to himself and that those who make mere merchandise of him deserve kicking, contempt, and death.

"And now why will you ask us to deny the humanity of the slave and estimate him only as the equal of the hog? Why ask us to do for nothing what two hundred millions of dollars could not induce you to do?"

Another striking feature of this speech was the spirit of sympathy and justice shown toward the Southern whites. He said:

"They are just what we should be in their situation. If slavery did not now exist among them they would not introduce it. If it did now exist among us we should not instantly give it up. . . . When the Southern people tell us they are no more responsible for the origin of slavery than we are, I acknowledge the fact. When it is said that the institution exists and that it is very difficult to get rid of it in any satisfactory way, I can understand and appreciate the same. I surely will not blame them for not doing what I should not know how to do myself. If all earthly power were given me I should not know what to do with the existing institution. My first impulse would be to free all the slaves and send them to Liberia, to their own native land. But a moment's reflection would convince me that whatever of high hope (as I think there is) there may be in this, in the long run, its sudden execution is impossible. If they were all landed there in a day they would all perish in the next ten days; and there are not surplus shipping and surplus money enough to carry them there in many times ten days. . . . But all this, to my judgment, furnishes no more excuse for permitting slavery to go into our own free territory than it would for reviving the African slave trade by law."

Senator Douglas sat on a front bench within ten or twelve feet of Lincoln during the whole of the latter's speech.

### FIRST STEPS TO ORGANIZE THE REPUBLICAN PARTY.

William H. Herndon was an Abolitionist like Owen Lovejoy. Lovejoy himself was present at this State Fair gathering, and he, too, heard the Lincoln-Douglas debate. As soon as Lincoln had concluded his speech Lovejoy or Codding moved forward from the crowd and announced that a meeting of the friends of freedom would be held that evening. The object in view was to take steps to organize the Republican party in Illinois as it had already been organized in Wisconsin, Michigan, and Ohio. Herndon perceived at once that the atmosphere of central Illinois was not yet tempered to such a movement. He knew that Lovejoy and the fiery souls allied with him could not be restrained, and that they intended to invite Lincoln personally to come to their meeting and say something cheering to them. He feared also that if Lincoln did not come they would be offended and perhaps turn against him in the coming contest for the Senatorship.

So he sought Lincoln at once, and urged him to get into his buggy and drive to Tazewell County under pretence of having professional business there, and to stay away from Springfield till this crowd of radicals should disperse to their several homes. Lincoln did so. He kept out of Springfield until the radicals had finished their work. But they put his name on a list of members of a Republican State Committee with-

out consulting him, and a little later Mr. Codding sent him a notice to attend a meeting of this committee. Lincoln replied to Codding in a letter dated November 27, 1854, asking why his name had been used without his consent. He said he supposed that his opposition to slavery was as strong as that of any member of the Republican party, but that the extent to which he was prepared to carry that opposition practically was probably not satisfactory to the gentlemen composing the meeting. As the leading men who were seeking to organize that party were present on the 4th of October at the discussion between Douglas and himself, he wished to know whether they had misunderstood him or whether he had misunderstood them. What answer Codding made, if any, we are not informed. But we know that Lovejoy was elected a member of the Legislature in November and that he voted for Lincoln for Senator.

### **LINCOLN KEEPS OUT OF IT IN 1854.**

Although Lincoln kept out of this pitfall in the manner indicated, Douglas met with a mishap in consequence of it. In the Ottawa joint debate four years later he began his attack on Lincoln with a reference to the meeting which Lovejoy and Codding had brought together immediately after the Springfield debate of October, 1854. Finding Lincoln's name in the list of members of the Republican State Committee there appointed, he assumed that Lincoln had been present and had taken part in the proceedings. So he wrote to Charles H. Lanphier, editor of the *Register*, the Democratic organ at Springfield, asking for a copy of the resolution passed at the meeting. Lanphier replied by sending him two copies of the *Register* of October 16, 1854, which purported to give a brief report of the meeting, including a copy of the resolutions in full. But, for some reason, a different set of resolutions had been substituted for the real ones in the *Register's* report. The bogus resolutions demanded, among other things, an entire repeal of the fugitive slave law. The real resolutions contained no such demand. There were also other material differences. Lincoln came to the conclusion eventually that Lanphier himself had made the substitution in order to help Thomas L. Harris in his local Congressional campaign against Richard Yates, and that when Douglas, four years later, called for a copy of the resolutions, he had forgotten the circumstances of the change. At all events, the resolutions were substantially a forgery. They had been passed at some irresponsible gathering in Kane County and had been substituted for the real resolutions of the Springfield meeting. Douglas was not a party to the forgery, but, as it turned out, was the principal victim of it.

### **DOUGLAS'S MISTAKE.**

At the Ottawa joint debate (1858) he read the bogus report, and proceeded with an air of triumph to apply it as a blister upon Lincoln in the presence of the assembled thousands. It was easy for Lincoln to reply that he was not at the Codding-Lovejoy Convention at all and that he had no responsibility for any action taken there. He supposed that the resolutions read by Douglas had been actually passed at the Springfield

meeting. He did not learn the truth until some days later. At the Freeport joint debate, however, he came armed with the real facts, and Douglas was then thrown on the defensive and made a rather sorry figure. He succeeded, however, in clearing his own skirts of any part in the forgery, and he promised that on his next visit to Springfield he would make a more thorough investigation of the matter. Several weeks passed without any further reference to the bogus resolutions on either side. Lincoln kept his eye on Douglas's movements, however, and observed that the latter made a visit to Springfield early in September. As no report of the promised investigation had been made when they met at the Galesburg joint debate (October 7), Lincoln made a scathing résumé of the whole affair, to the serious discomfiture of his antagonist.\*

Twelve days after the Springfield debate of 1854 the two champions met again at Peoria. Douglas was evidently troubled by the unexpected vigor of his opponent, for after the Peoria debate he approached Lincoln and flattered him by saying that he was giving him more trouble on the territorial and slavery question than the whole United States Senate, and therefore proposed that both should abandon the field and return to their homes. Lincoln consented. Douglas, however, broke the agreement by making a speech at Princeton on the evening of the 18th of October. He afterwards said that he didn't want to speak at Princeton, but that Lovejoy provoked him and forced him to do so in self-defence. Lincoln was not satisfied with that explanation, but he considered himself released from the agreement, and accordingly spoke at Urbana on the evening of the 24th.

### THE URBANA SPEECH.

Henry C. Whitney heard the Urbana speech. He gives an account of it in his book, "Life on the Circuit with Lincoln." Whitney was a resident of Urbana. He says that he called at the old Pennsylvania House on the east side of the public square on the evening of the 24th, and that

---

\* The genuine and the bogus resolutions are subjoined:

#### GENUINE RESOLUTIONS.

*Resolved*, That as freedom is national and slavery sectional and local, the absence of all law on the subject of slavery presumes the existence of a state of *freedom alone*, while slavery exists only by virtue of positive law.

That slavery can exist in a Territory only by usurpation and in violation of law, and we believe that Congress has the right and should prohibit its extension into such territory, so long as it remains under the guardianship of the general government.

#### BOGUS RESOLUTION.

*Resolved*, That the times imperatively demand the reorganization of parties, and repudiating all previous party attachments, names and predilections, we unite ourselves together in defence of the liberty and Constitution of the country, and will hereafter coöperate as the Republican party pledged to the accomplishment of the following purposes: To bring the administration of the government back to the control of first principles; to restore Nebraska and Kansas to the position of free Territories; that as the Constitution of the United States vests in the States and not in Congress the power to legislate for the extradition of fugitives from labor, to repeal and entirely abrogate the fugitive slave law; to restrict slavery to those States in which it exists; to prohibit the admission of any more slave States into the Union; to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia; to exclude slavery from all the Territories over which the government has exclusive jurisdiction; and to resist the acquirement of any more Territories, unless the practice of slavery therein forever shall have been prohibited.



he there found Mr. Lincoln and David Davis in a plainly furnished bedroom with a comfortable wood fire. It was his first meeting with either of them. He was received cordially by both. Lincoln was in his story-telling humor, and after some time spent in that way they went over to the court house opposite, where eleven tallow candles, burning on the lower sashes of the windows, gave a sign of something unusual going on in the town. The house was full of people, and Lincoln then and there made his third speech on the mighty issue of slavery. Whitney was impressed, as I had been twenty days earlier, that he had been listening to "a mental and moral giant." The three men went back to the hotel together, and Lincoln resumed his story-telling at the point where he had left off, "as if the making of such a speech as this was his pastime."

Although speechmaking had now come to an end, the campaign continued. Lincoln and his friend, Stephen T. Logan, were nominated for members of the lower house of the Legislature from Sangamon County. Lincoln had protested against the use of his name, but had finally yielded to the importunities of his friends, who urged that the party ought to bring forward its very strongest men. That this was a sound view was shown by what followed. Lincoln and Logan were elected by about 600 majority. Then Lincoln resigned his seat in order to improve his chances in the coming Senatorial contest. Looking at the large majority cast at the regular election for the Whig candidates, he did not doubt that at the special election a Whig would be chosen. But the very opposite thing happened. The day for voting turned out to be cold and rainy. The Democrats pretended to take no interest in the special election, but secretly contrived to bring out their full strength, and thus elected their candidate by eighty-two votes. This made a difference of two in the Legislature, where there were no votes to spare.

### STRUGGLE FOR THE SENATORSHIP IN 1854-5.

Notwithstanding this mishap, Lincoln made an active canvass for the Senatorship. The term of James Shields was expiring, and Douglas was moving heaven and earth to secure his reelection. Shields had supported the Nebraska bill in a lukewarm way as a Democratic party measure, but he professed to take no special interest in it. He was an Irish soldier of fortune, and a very winning one personally. He was twice elected Senator of the United States after he lost his seat from Illinois—once from Minnesota and again from Missouri. It seemed as though he only needed to show himself in any State where a Senatorial vacancy existed in order to be promptly chosen to fill it.

As soon as the Legislative returns were in Lincoln made an estimate of the chances. He concluded that there was an anti-Nebraska majority of one in the State Senate and of thirteen in the House. He wrote letters to the members whom he personally knew, soliciting their votes, and he sought to reach others by the influence of friends, especially Elihu B. Washburne and Joseph Gillespie. Ideal justice certainly demanded that he be elected if the anti-Nebraska forces had a majority. Such a majority existed, but it was heterogeneous. All the varieties and discordances of opinion that existed in the State cropped up in the Legislature,

including some whose existence had not been suspected. Some men who had been elected on the anti-Nebraska ticket actually voted for Shields on grounds of personal friendship. Even that was not the strangest or the most baffling element in the mixture, for Lincoln discovered ten days before the voting began that Joel A. Matteson, Governor of the State, had an ambition to fill Shields's place in the Senate and that he had been able to recruit a small third party composed of members from the vicinity of the Illinois and Michigan canal who were devoted to his personal interests. Any such votes, if obtained, would be detached from Lincoln, and their movement would be made comparatively easy by the fact that Matteson had never committed himself either for or against the Nebraska bill. So his supporters could say or pretend that Matteson was as much opposed to it as Lincoln himself. The supporters of Shields, if they should find it impossible to reelect him, would naturally turn to Matteson. Although Lincoln and his friends had ample warning of this Matteson diversion, they were utterly unable to head it off.

### A HETEROGENEOUS LEGISLATURE.

The Legislature consisted of one hundred members—twenty-five Senators and seventy-five Representatives. Thirteen of the Senators had been elected in 1852 for a four years' term and were now holding over. Among these were John M. Palmer of Carlinville, N. B. Judd of Chicago, and Burton C. Cook of Ottawa, all of whom had been elected as Democrats, but had refused to follow Douglas in support of the Nebraska bill. These three men, with two Representatives from Madison County, named Baker and Allen, voted for Lyman Trumbull on every ballot. Trumbull had just been elected a member of Congress in the St. Clair district on the anti-Nebraska ticket. The first mention of his name in Lincoln's printed correspondence is found in a letter to Joseph Gillespie dated December 1, 1854, in which he (Lincoln) asks the question "whether Trumbull intends to make a push." Then he adds: "We have the Legislature clearly enough on joint ballot, but the Senate is very close, and Cullom told me to-day that the Nebraska men will stave off the election if they can. Even if we get into joint vote we shall have difficulty to unite our forces."

The State Senate consisted of nine Whigs, thirteen regular Democrats, and the three anti-Nebraska Democrats above named. One of the holding-over Senators (Uri Osgood) represented a district which had given an anti-Nebraska majority in this election. One of the Whig members (J. L. D. Morrison) of the St. Clair-Monroe district was elected on the same ticket with Trumbull, but he was a man of Southern leanings, and his vote on the Senatorial question was considered doubtful.

The Whig Senators, in order to conciliate the anti-Nebraska Democrats, voted to give the entire patronage of the Senate to them, including good slices to Osgood and Morrison. In this way they secured an agreement to go into joint convention, but they got no other *quid pro quo*; for in the Senatorial election both Osgood and Morrison voted for Shields. In the House there were forty-six anti-Nebraska men of all descriptions and twenty-eight Democrats. One member, Randolph Heath of the Lawrence-Crawford district, did not vote in the election for Senator at any time.

In the chaotic condition of parties it was not to be expected that all the opponents of Douglas would coalesce at once. The chief obstacle to such union was the dividing line between Whigs and Democrats. The Whig party was expecting to reap large gains from the split in the Democratic party on the Nebraska question. This was a vain hope, because the Whigs were split also, but while it existed it fanned the flame of old enmities. Moreover, the anti-Nebraska Democrats in the campaign had claimed that they were the true Democracy and that they were purifying the party in order to preserve it intact and give it new strength and vitality. They could not instantly abandon that claim by voting for a Whig for the highest office to be filled.

### TRUMBULL ELECTED SENATOR.

The two houses met in the Hall of Representatives on February 8, 1855, to choose a Senator. Every inch of space on the floor and lobby was occupied by members and their political friends, and the gallery was adorned by well-dressed women, including Mrs. Lincoln and Mrs. Matteson, the Governor's wife, and her fair daughters. The Senatorial election had been the topic of chief concern throughout the State for many months and now the interest was centred in a single room not more than one hundred feet square. The excitement was all-pervading, for everybody knew that the event was fraught with consequences of great pith and moment, far transcending the fate of any individual.

Mr. Lincoln had been designated as the choice of a caucus of forty-five members, including all the Whigs except Morrison and most of the Free-Soilers.

When the joint convention had been called to order General James Shields was nominated by Senator Benjamin Graham, Abraham Lincoln by Representative Stephen T. Logan, and Lyman Trumbull by Senator John M. Palmer. The first vote resulted as follows:

Necessary to a choice, 50.

Lincoln .....	45
Shields .....	41
Trumbull .....	5
Scattering .....	8
Total .....	<hr/> 99

Several members of the House, who had been elected as anti-Nebraska Democrats, voted for Lincoln and a few for Shields. The vote for Trumbull consisted of Senators Palmer, Judd, and Cook, and Representatives Baker and Allen.

On the second vote Lincoln had 43 and Trumbull 6, and there were no other changes. A third roll-call resulted like the second. Thereupon Judge Logan moved an adjournment, but this was voted down by 42 to 56. On the fourth call Lincoln's vote fell to 38 and Trumbull's rose to 11. On the sixth, Lincoln lost two more and Trumbull dropped to eight.

It now became apparent from the commotion on the Democratic side of

the chamber that the Matteson flank-movement was in progress, for the seventh ballot resulted as follows:

Necessary to a choice, 50.

Matteson .....	44
Lincoln .....	38
Trumbull .....	9
Scattering .....	7
Total .....	<u>98</u>

On the eighth call Matteson gained two votes, Lincoln fell to 27, and Trumbull received 18. On the ninth and tenth Matteson had 47, Lincoln dropped to 15, and Trumbull rose to 35.

The excitement now became intense, for it was believed that the next vote would be decisive. Matteson wanted only three of a majority, and the only way to prevent his election was to turn Lincoln's fifteen to Trumbull, or Trumbull's thirty-five to Lincoln. Obviously the former proposition was the only safe one, for none of Lincoln's men would go to Matteson in any kind of shuffle, whereas three of Trumbull's Democratic friends might easily be lost if an attempt were made to transfer them to the leader of the Whigs. Lincoln was quick to see the impending danger and to apply the remedy. He was the only one who could apply it, since the fifteen supporters who still clung to him would never have left him except at his own request. He now besought his friends to vote for Trumbull. Some natural tears were shed by Judge Logan when he yielded to the appeals of his dear friend and former partner. Logan said that the demands of principle were superior to those of personal attachment, and he transferred his vote to Trumbull. All of the remaining fourteen followed his example, and there was a gain of one vote that had been previously cast for Archibald Williams. So the tenth and final roll-call gave Trumbull 51 votes and Matteson 47. One member (Waters) still voted for Williams and one (Heath) did not vote at all. Thus the one hundred members of the joint convention were accounted for, and Trumbull became Senator by a majority of one.

This result astounded the Democrats. They were more disappointed by it than they would have been by the election of Lincoln. They regarded Trumbull as an arch traitor. That he and his fellow traitors, Palmer, Judd, and Cook, should have carried off the great prize was an unexpected and most bitter pill, but they did not know how bitter it was until Trumbull took his seat in the Senate and opened fire on the Nebraska iniquity.

#### LINCOLN SATISFIED WITH THE RESULT.

Lincoln took his defeat in good part. Later in the evening there was a reception given at the house of Mr. Ninian Edwards, whose wife was a sister of Mrs. Lincoln, and who had been much interested in Lincoln's success. He was greatly surprised to hear, just before the guests began to arrive, that Trumbull had been elected. He and his family were easily reconciled to the result, however, since Mrs. Trumbull had been from her

girlhood, as Miss Julia Jayne, a favorite in Springfield society. When she and Judge Trumbull arrived they were naturally the centre of attraction. Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln came in a little later. The hostess and her husband greeted them most cordially, saying that they had wished for his success, and that while he must be disappointed yet he should bear in mind that his principles had won. Mr. Lincoln smiled, moved toward the newly elected Senator, and saying, "Not too disappointed to congratulate my friend Trumbull," shook him warmly by the hand. Mr. Lincoln's own testimony as to the facts and his own feelings regarding them are set forth at length, and quite minutely, in a letter to Elihu B. Washburne, dated February 9, 1855, the next day after the election. He says in conclusion: "I regret my defeat moderately, but am not nervous about it. I could have headed off every combination and been elected had it not been for Matteson's double game—and his defeat now gives me more pleasure than my own gives me pain. On the whole it is perhaps as well for our general cause that Trumbull is elected."

And so it seems to me now. Lincoln's defeat was my first great disappointment in politics, and I was slow in forgiving Judd, Palmer, and Cook for their share in bringing it about. But before the campaign of 1858 came on I was able to see that they had acted wisely and well. They had not only satisfied their own constituents, and led many of them into the new Republican organization, but they had given a powerful reinforcement to the party of freedom in the nation at large, in the person of Lyman Trumbull, whose high abilities and noble career in the Senate paved the way for thousands of recruits from the ranks of the Democratic party.

### PERSONAL ASSOCIATION WITH LINCOLN.

As I have already remarked, my personal acquaintance with Lincoln began in 1854. I had just passed my twentieth birthday. I was introduced to him shortly before he rose to make the speech which has been here feebly described. I had studied his countenance a few moments beforehand, when his features were in repose. It was a marked face, but so overspread with sadness that I thought that Shakespeare's melancholy Jacques had been translated from the forest of Arden to the capital of Illinois. Yet when I was presented to him and we began a few words of conversation this expression of sorrow dropped from him instantly. His face lighted up with a winning smile, and where I had a moment before seen only leaden sorrow I now beheld keen intelligence, genuine kindness of heart, and the promise of true friendship.

After this introduction it was my fortune during the next four years to meet him several times each year, as his profession brought him frequently to Chicago, where I was employed in journalism. I became Secretary of the Republican State Committee and was thus thrown into closer intercourse with him, and thus I learned that he was an exceedingly shrewd politician. N. B. Judd, Dr. C. H. Ray, and Ebenezer Peck were the leading party managers, but Lincoln was a frequent visitor at the campaign headquarters, and on important occasions he was specially sent for. The committee paid the utmost deference to his opinions. In fact, he was nearer to the people than they were. Travelling the circuit he was

constantly brought in contact with the most capable and discerning men in the rural community. He had a more accurate knowledge of public opinion in central Illinois than any other man who visited the committee rooms, and he knew better than anybody else what kind of arguments would be influential with the voters and what kind of men could best present them.

I learned also by this association that he was extremely eager for political preferment. This seemed to me then, as it does now, perfectly proper. Nor did I ever hear any criticism visited upon him on account of his personal ambition. On the contrary, his merits placed him so far in advance that nothing was deemed too good for him. Nobody was jealous of him. Everybody in the party desired for him all the preferment that he could possibly desire for himself. In the great campaign of 1858 I travelled with him almost constantly for four months, the particulars of which journeying I have related in the second edition of Herndon's "Life of Lincoln." After his election as President I was sent by my employers to Washington City as correspondent of the *Chicago Press and Tribune*, and thus I had occasional meetings with him until very near the day of his death. In short, I was privileged to be within the range of his personal influence during the last eleven years of his life, when he was making history and when history was making him.

#### LINCOLN AS A HUMORIST AND A MORALIST.

Mr. Lincoln was a many-sided man and one who presented striking contrasts. He was the most humorous being I ever met, and also one of the most serious. His humor was of the impromptu and contagious kind that takes possession of all parts of the person as well as all the parts of speech. As a master of drollery, he surpassed all of his contemporaries in Illinois, and yet his solemnity as a public speaker and a political and moral instructor was like that of an Old Testament prophet. He was the only public speaker I have ever known thus doubly gifted, whose powers of mirth did not submerge or even impair his powers of gravity. "He combined within himself," says Mr. Henry C. Whitney, "the strangely diverse rôles of head of the State in the agony of civil war, and also that of the court jester; and was supremely eminent in both characters." This sounds like a paradox, but it is quite true. The Lincoln who fought Douglas on the stump in 1854 and 1858 took all of his jocose as well as his serious traits to Washington in 1861.

How are we to account for these wonderful turns "from grave to gay, from lively to severe"? Well, he was not the only person thus doubly endowed. The same genius that gave us Macbeth, and Lear, and Hamlet, gave us Falstaff, and Touchstone, and Dogberry. Shakespeare was the superior of Sophocles in tragedy and of Plautus in comedy. Lincoln did not have the gift of poetry, but within the range of prose his power of expression was akin to that of Shakespeare. I chanced to open the other day his Cooper Institute speech. This is one of the few printed speeches that I did not hear him deliver in person. As I read the concluding pages of that speech the conflict of opinion that preceded the conflict of arms then sweeping upon the country like an approaching solar eclipse,

seemed prefigured like a chapter of the Book of Fate. Here again he was the Old Testament prophet, before whom Horace Greeley bowed his head, saying that he had never listened to a greater speech, although he had heard several of Webster's best.

### AS AN ANTI-SLAVERY ORATOR.

The subject of human slavery, which formed the principal theme of Mr. Lincoln's speech, has touched many lips with eloquence and lighted many hearts with fire. I listened to most of the great anti-slavery orators of the last half century, including Wendell Phillips, Owen Lovejoy, and Henry Ward Beecher, but I must say that Abraham Lincoln, who was not classed as an anti-slavery orator, or even an anti-slavery man, before he issued the Emancipation Proclamation, made a stronger anti-slavery impression upon me than any of them.

The reason why he was not reckoned by the anti-slavery men as one of themselves was that he made the preservation of the Union, not the destruction of slavery, his chief concern. But he held then, as he did later, that the Union must be preserved consistently with the Constitution and with the rule of the majority. Preserving it by infringing these was, in his view, an agreement to destroy it.

Mr. Lincoln quickly gained the confidence of strangers, and, if they were much with him, their affection as well. I found myself strongly drawn to him from the first, and this feeling remains to me now as a priceless possession. James Russell Lowell said that he counted it a great gain to have lived at the same time with Abraham Lincoln. How much greater the gain to have felt the subtle influence of his presence. This personal quality, whose influence I saw growing and widening among the people of Illinois from day to day, eventually penetrated to all the Northern States, and after his death to all the Southern States. It was this magical personality that commanded all loyal hearts. It was this leadership that upheld confidence in the dark hours of the war and sent back to the White House the sublime refrain:

"We are coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand more."

Could any other man then living have grappled the affections and confidence of the plain people and held them steadfast and unwavering as did this homely giant of the prairies? He was himself one of the plain people. What was in his mind and heart was in theirs. He spoke straight into their bosoms. He translated the weightiest political and social problems this country has ever dealt with into language that all could understand. Nobody was so humble, nobody so high, that he could not draw new lessons and fresh inspiration from Abraham Lincoln during that great crisis.

Looking back upon the whole anti-slavery conflict, is it not a cause for wonder that the man who finally led the nation through the Red Sea and gave his own life at the very entrance of the promised land, was born in a slave State, of the most humble parents, in crushing poverty, and in the depths of ignorance, and had reached the age of fifty before he was much known outside of his own State? Was there ever such un-

promising material from which to fashion the destroyer of American slavery?

### **LINCOLN'S GROWING FAME.**

Abraham Lincoln has been in his grave more than forty-two years. When he was stricken down by an assassin's hand it was said by many of his contemporaries, and perhaps believed by most of them, that he had passed away at the culminating point of his fame.

The world's history contains nothing more dramatic than the scene in Ford's Theatre. The civil war, the emancipation of a race, the salvation of our beloved Union, combined to throw the strongest light upon "the deep damnation of his taking off." In spite of these blazing accessories, we should have expected, before the end of forty-two years, that a considerable amount of dust would have settled upon his tomb. This is a busy world. Each generation has its own problems to grapple with, its own joys and sorrows, its own cares and griefs, to absorb its thoughts and compel its tears. Time moves on, and while the history of the past increases in volume, each particular thing in it dwindles in size, and so also do most men. But some men bulk larger as the years recede.

The most striking fact of our time, of a psychological kind, is the growth of Lincoln's fame since the earth closed over his remains. The word *Lincolniana* has been added to our dictionary. This means that a kind of literature under that name, extensive enough to be separately classified, catalogued, advertised, marketed, and collected into distinct libraries, has grown up. There is a Lincolnian cult among us as well as a Shakesperean cult, and it is gaining votaries from year to year. The first list of Lincoln literature was published by William V. Spencer, in Boston, in 1865. It included 231 titles of books and pamphlets published after Lincoln's death, all of which were in the compiler's possession. This was followed in 1866 by John Russell Bartlett's "Literature of the Rebellion," including in a separate list 300 titles of Eulogies, Sermons, Orationes, and Poems, all published after Lincoln's death. In 1870 Andrew Boyd, a directory publisher of Albany, N. Y., published his "Memorial Lincoln Bibliography," an octavo volume of 175 pages, in which he gave the title and description of the books, pamphlets, and relics then in his own collection. The introduction to this bibliography was written by Charles Henry Hart, still living at Philadelphia. This collection was sold to Major William H. Lambert of Philadelphia, whose collection of *Lincolniana* is now one of the most important in the country, and especially in autograph letters. Major Lambert was a soldier in the civil war and is the author of a most interesting address on the life and character of Lincoln, delivered before his fellow soldiers of the G. A. R. His collection embraces about 1,200 bound volumes, including separately bound pamphlets, about 100 autograph letters and documents of Lincoln, fifty broadsides, and many miscellaneous pieces.

### **LINCOLNIAN LITERATURE.**

A Lincoln bibliography was compiled by Mr. Daniel Fish of Minneapolis and published in the year 1900. It was revised, enlarged, and republished in 1906, containing 1,080 separate titles. It does not include peri-



odical literature, or political writings of the period in which Lincoln lived unless they owe their origin to him as an individual. Judge Fish has in his own collection of Lincolniana 295 bound volumes, 559 pamphlets, and 100 portraits.

Mr. Judd Stewart of Plainfield, N. J., has a very notable collection of Lincolniana, embracing 380 bound volumes, about 1,200 bound pamphlets, several unpublished letters, between 700 and 800 engravings, lithographs and paintings, and many songs and pieces of sheet music. All of these items have been passed upon by Judge Fish as purely Lincolniana. Mr. Stewart has more than 100 titles which are not included in Fish's bibliography.

A very remarkable collection is that of John E. Burton of Milwaukee, Wis., consisting of 2,360 bound volumes and pamphlets, the collection of which, Mr. Burton says, "has been the restful and happy labor of twenty-eight years." Among other things he has the original proclamation of emancipation signed by Lincoln and Seward and attested by John G. Nicolay and John Hay.

Mr. Charles W. McLellan of Champlain, N. Y., has 1,921 bound volumes, 1,348 pamphlets, eight manuscripts, 138 autographs of Lincoln, 1,100 engravings, and 579 songs and miscellaneous pieces, in all more than 5,000 items.

Mr. D. H. Newhall of 59 Maiden Lane, New York, has a list of 487 collectors of Lincolniana, for the most part unknown to each other, who are now living; that is, persons who have such collections and who are constantly adding to them. I have corresponded with some of them. Mr. E. M. Bowman of Alton, Ill., has 247 titles of bound and unbound books and pamphlets; Mr. John S. Little of Rushville, Ill., has 257, and so on.

The existence of a demand for Lincolniana creates a supply. There are dealers in it, some of whom buy and sell that literature exclusively, while others make it a large part of their trade. In the former class is Mr. D. H. Newhall, already mentioned. In the latter is Mr. A. S. Clark, of Peekskill, N. Y. I have a recent catalogue issued by the latter containing 496 titles, with the price of each annexed. Mr. Newhall informs me that he has 2,874 titles in his card list of books and pamphlets, *i. e.*, that he knows of the existence of that number, not counting periodical literature or broadsides. His list is still incomplete, and he believes that it will reach 3,000 when finished. Mr. D. S. Passavant of Zelenople, near Pittsburgh, Pa., deals in Lincolniana in foreign languages. Lives of Lincoln have been published in the French, German, Dutch, Swedish, Italian, Russian, Japanese, Spanish, Portuguese, Greek, Welsh, and Hawaiian tongues. There is a dealer in Lincolnian relics at No. 46 West Twenty-eighth Street, New York City. Mr. Oldroyd's great collection of such relics, now placed in the house where Lincoln died in Washington City, is too well known to need special description.

Equally significant is the daily citation of Lincoln's name and authority by public writers and speakers and in conversation between individuals, as an authority in politics and in the conduct of life. Everybody seems to think that a quotation from him is a knock-down argument. His sayings are common property. They are quoted as freely by Democrats as by Republicans. All help themselves from that storehouse, as they make

quotations from Shakespeare, or Burns, or Longfellow. He is more quoted to-day than he was in his lifetime, and more than any other American ever was.

#### CONCLUSION.

So we see that Mr. Lincoln's death did not take place at the culmination of his fame, but that it has been rising and widening ever since and shows no signs of abatement. Of no other American of our times can this be said. Can it be said of any other man of the same period in any part of the world? I cannot find in any country a special department of literature collecting around the name of any statesman of the nineteenth century like that which celebrates the name of our martyr President. This mass of literature is produced and collected and cherished because the hearts of men and women go out to Lincoln. It is not mere admiration for his mental and moral qualities, but a silent response to the magnetic influence of his humanity, his unselfish and world-embracing charity. And thus though dead he yet speaketh to men, women, and children who never saw him, and so, I think, he will continue to speak to generations yet unborn, world without end, Amen.



